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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 003387

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STATE FOR NEA/ARP, LONDON FOR TSOU, PARIS FOR ZEYA

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [KISL](#) [KU](#)
SUBJECT: KUWAITI COMMENTATORS CONDEMN "ISLAMIC FASCIST"
DESCRIPTION

REF: RIYADH 06571

¶1. (U) A number of Kuwaiti media figures broadly criticized President Bush's use of the phrase "Islamic fascists." They contended that the characterization was aimed at all Muslims rather than a small segment of the population. A few examples from the Kuwaiti op-ed pages:

- "I was not surprised by the remarks of U.S. President George W. Bush recently when he gave a new name to Muslims: 'Fascist Muslims.'"
- "to associate all terror groups with Muslims and Islam, just as U.S. President George W. Bush did when he used the term 'Muslim fascists,' is absolutely unacceptable and intolerable."
- "he (has) always attacked Muslims since the September 11 attack and he always connects Islam and terrorism."

¶2. (U) Criticism came not only from opinion page contributors but also from more moderate voices such as the chairman of a major Kuwaiti business group Nasser Mohammed Al-Khorafi who said: "We, along with other people in the whole world, are standing united with your rejection of fascism but the grim picture of the Lebanese victims who died due to the Israeli aggression on Lebanon are showing us...there is a misunderstanding on who should be accused of fascism."

¶3. (C/NF) Comment: There were no instances of any recognition in media reports that the characterization 'Islamic fascists' was aimed only at a small portion of the population or that the characterization might accurately describe the attributes of an extreme element within the Islamic community. The near unanimous public interpretation of President Bush's identification of the "Islamic fascist" enemy was that the enemy was Islam and Muslims as a whole, not a small extreme segment of the population. Just as there is a belief in some non-Muslim quarters that Islam is bent on domination, there is a strong belief among Muslims that Islam is under siege by "the West," thus the sensitivity to labeling and real or perceived mis-characterizations of their religion. End Comment.
LeBaron